

NSC BRIEFING

NO CHANGE IN CLASS. (1)

X UNCLASSIFIED

EXPIRES 1 JAN 1960 BY 1200Z C

NEXT REVIEW DATE:

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CUBA

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21 January 1959

I. The past week saw a strong upsurge of anti-US feeling.

A. Though the new govt contains some responsible men favorably disposed to US, anti-US sentiments are evident among many others, with most ready to place worst possible interpretation on every US action, private or official, past or present.

1. Anti-US feeling grew among rebels during civil war over US supplies to Batista (until March) and US military missions.

B. Current upsurge stimulated largely by criticism in US of Cuban executions.

1. Castro sees criticism as threat of US intervention.

2. Over 200 executed; about 3,000 awaiting trial.

3. Executions--generally popular in Cuba but criticized by a few responsible Cubans--are being condemned all over hemisphere; but Castro is ignoring all but US criticism.

C. Cubans also demanding extradition of "criminals" who escaped.

1. Biggest in US is Rolando Masferrer, hated pro-Batista senator and gangster whose private army in Oriente Province was responsible for many tortures and murders. A former Communist, he was assistant to French political commissar Andre Marti during Spanish civil war.

II. Castro's anti-US campaign is provoking misgivings among some Cubans.

A. Highly regarded Prime Minister Miro Cardona is angered; it was one of reasons for his 19 Jan threat to resign.

B. At least two Havana newspapers have urged more restraint.

III. Though most govt leaders anti-Communist, Communists have been permitted to exploit new opportunities, and Castro says their Popular Socialist party (PSP)--outlawed in 1953--can now operate legally.

A. PSP (8,000-12,000 members) surfaced immediately after Batista's fall.

1. PSP has opened offices in Havana and Santiago; resumed publication of daily newspaper Hoy; held first public rally 10 January.

2. Exiled Cuban Communists, as well as Venezuelan, Dominican Communists, arriving Cuba.

B. Way opening for Communist participation in elections promised in 18-24 months.

1. A Castro lieutenant, the Argentine "Che" Guevara, who may be a Communist, says he would not oppose Communist participation in govt.

C. Armed forces, being almost completely destroyed and rebuilt with Castro forces, likely to be Communist-infiltrated.

IV. Several members new govt increasingly irritated, frustrated over President Urrutia's deferring all decisions to Castro, thus slowing down govt operations.

A. This main reason for Miro Cardona's threat to resign.

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B. Education Minister was also considering his resignation.

C. If this problem not settled, public confidence will be seriously shaken, and period political instability continue.

D. Similar situation exists in armed forces.

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- V. Castro's victory may bring new trouble for Latin American dictators.
- A. Exiles from rightist regimes in Dominican Republic and Nicaragua have arrived in Cuba, expecting aid for plots.
- B. Haitian and Paraguayan exiles also getting sympathetic ear from Castro.

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